

In the Claims:

- 1.(currently amended) A method of making tablets of a cleaning composition or of a water-softening composition or tablet precursors therefor, comprising the steps of: wherein:
forming a premix ~~is made~~ of cleaning or water-softening composition particulates and a lubricant;
providing the premix ~~is fed~~ into a feed port of an extruder; and
~~the~~ extruding the resulting mixture ~~is extruded~~;
wherein the extrudate ~~extrusion~~ is of one or more strands which are separated into tablets or scored into tablet precursors, shortly after their extrusion, either as-extruded or after a further post-extrusion enhancement treatment.
- 2.(currently amended) A method according to as claimed in claim 1 wherein the method further comprises the step of:
providing a binder ~~is fed~~ into the feed port of the extruder ~~at or at a point~~ downstream of the feed port, wherein the binder ~~is~~ being a solid at room temperature but ~~being~~ is mixed in the form of a liquid with the cleaning or water-softening composition particles ~~as a liquid~~ or the binder becomes becoming a liquid inside the extruder.
- 3.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in claim 1 or 2~~ wherein the extrusion pressure is in the range from 0.3 MPa to 10 MPa.
- 4.(currently amended) A method according to claim 3 ~~as claimed in~~ claim 3 wherein the mixture is extruded at a pressure in excess of 1.2 MPa.
- 5.(currently amended) A method according to ~~as claimed in~~ claim 4 wherein the mixture is extruded at a pressure in excess of 4 MPa.

- 6.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the extruder is a twin screw extruder with screw overlap, configured predominantly for extrudate advancement and not for mixing or shearing the extrudate.
- 7.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein a strand is subjected to post-extrusion enhancement.
- 8.(currently amended) A method according to claim 7 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein a strand is subjected to assisted post-extrusion cooling.
- 9.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the temperature of the material in the extruder is in the range from 40 to 95°C, preferably from 40 to 85°C.
- 10.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the lubricant is a liquid at room temperature.
- 11.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the lubricant comprises a sucrose ester or a sorbitan ester.
- 12.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the lubricant comprises a sucrose oleate.
- 13.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 ~~as claimed in any preceding claim~~ wherein the binder is a material which is solid at room temperature but which is molten under the extrusion conditions.

14.(currently amended) A method according to claim 1 as claimed in any preceding claim wherein the binder is polyethylene glycol.

15.(currently amended) A method of making tablets of a cleaning composition or of a water-softening composition, or tablet precursors therefor, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

forming a premix ~~is made~~ of cleaning or water-softening composition particulates and a lubricant;

providing the premix is fed into a feed port of an extruder;

providing a binder ~~is fed~~ into ~~the~~ an extruder at the feed port of the extruder or at a point ~~or~~ downstream of the feed port, wherein the binder ~~is~~ being a solid at room temperature but is ~~being~~ mixed as a liquid with the cleaning or water-softening composition particles ~~as a liquid~~ or becomes ~~becoming~~ a liquid inside the extruder;

~~the resulting mixture is extruded~~ extruding the mixture at a pressure in excess of 4 MPa; and

the extrudate ~~extrusion~~ is ~~of~~ one or more strands which are separated into tablets or scored into tablet precursors, ~~shortly after their extrusion~~, either as-extruded or after the extrudate is subjected to a post-extrusion enhancement treatment step.

16.(currently amended) A method of making cleaning or water-softening composition tablets or tablet precursors therefor, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

providing cleaning or water-softening composition particulates ~~are fed~~ into the feed port of an extruder;

mixing a binder ~~is mixed~~ with the cleaning or water-softening composition particles, prior to, at the same time as, or after the cleaning or water-softening composition particles are fed into the feed port, the binder being a solid at room but is a liquid when mixed ~~temperature but being mixed~~ with the cleaning or

water-softening composition particles or which becomes ~~as a liquid or becoming~~
a liquid inside the extruder;

extruding the resulting mixture ~~is extruded at a pressure in excess of 4~~
MPa; and

the extruded extrudate ~~extrusion~~ is of one or more strands which are
separated into tablets or scored into tablet precursors shortly after their extrusion
either as-extruded or after the extrudate is subjected to a post-extrusion
enhancement treatment step.

17.(currently amended) A method according to ~~as claimed in~~ claim 16 which

comprises the further step of: ~~wherein a lubricant is mixed~~

mixing a lubricant with the cleaning or water-softening composition
particulates to make a premix which is subsequently fed into the extruder.

18.(currently amended) A method of making cleaning composition tablets or tablet
precursors, which comprises the steps of:

advancing ~~wherein~~ a pasty or plastic cleaning or water-softening
composition ~~is advanced~~ in an intermeshing twin screw extruder;

extruding ~~a~~ ~~and extruded as a~~ strand which is separated into tablets or
tablet precursors shortly after their extrusion, either as-extruded or optionally,
subjecting the strand to a ~~after~~ post-extrusion enhancement prior to separating the
strand into tablets or tablet precursors.

19.(currently amended) A method of making cleaning composition tablets

according to claim 18. ~~wherein a pasty or plastic cleaning or water-softening~~
~~composition is advanced in a forming extruder and extruded as a strand which is~~
~~separated into tablets or scored into tablet precursors, shortly after their extrusion,~~
~~either as extruded or after post extrusion enhancement.~~

20.(currently amended) A method for aiding the flow of Use of a lubricant for the purpose of aiding the flow of inorganic cleaning or water-softening particulate in an extruder which method comprises the step of:
providing a lubricant to the extruder.

21. (canceled)

22. (currently amended) A tablet formed by a process according to claim 1 wherein method or use as claimed in any of claims 1 to 20, the resulting tablet has having a smooth skin and a core of consolidated particulate texture.

23.(currently amended) A method of washing wares or of softening water, using a tablet according to claim 22 as claimed in claim 21 or 22.

24.(currently amended) A method of lubricating a particulate material, the method comprising the step of:
mixing a sucrose ester, or and/or a sorbitan ester, or a mixture of a sucrose ester and a sorbitan ester with the particulate material.

25.(canceled)